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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/687,646	10/20/2003	Tomoki Ohkawa	Q77972	4425
23373	7590	03/24/2005	EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037			RAMAKRISHNAIAH, MELUR	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		2643

DATE MAILED: 03/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/687,646	OHKAWA ET AL.
	Examiner Melur Ramakrishnaiah	Art Unit 2643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2003.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1,2,6,7, 11-13 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 3-5, 8-10 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3-22-2005

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-2, 6-7, 11, 12, 13, are rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(b) as being anticipated by Wakahara et al. (JP 06-261316, hereinafter Wakahara).

Regarding claim 1, Wakahara discloses a television conference system comprising: a promoter terminal (reads on 300, Drawings: 1-2, 4) that is used by a promoter who promotes a conference, and a plurality of participant terminals (302-305, Drawings: 1, 4) that are used by participants and connected to the promoter terminal via communication line, wherein a maximum connection line number N of the participant terminals which are connectable to the promoter terminal is previously set (this is implied as the reference illustrates four of the participant terminals 302-305 are connected to 300, see Drawing: 4A), and a connection line number M of the participant terminals (303-304, Drawing 4A) which are connected to the promoter terminal is set to $M \leq N$ (abstract and paragraphs: 0011, 0017-0022).

Regarding claim 6, Wakahara discloses a television conference system in which a promoter terminal (reads on 300, Drawings: 1-2, 4) that is used by a promoter who promotes conference, and participant terminals (302-305, Drawings: 1, 4) that are used by participants in the conference are connected to one another via communication line, the terminal comprising: a television conference control unit in (300, Drawing: 2)

including a terminal function selection unit for selecting the terminal function as either of a promoter terminal of a conference or a participant terminal in accordance with selection, wherein a maximum connection line number of a participant terminals which are connectable to the promoter terminal is previously set to the television conference unit (this is implied as the reference illustrates four of the participant terminals 302-305 are connected to 300, see Drawing: 4A, abstract and paragraphs: 0011, 0017-0022).

Regarding claims 12-13, Wakahara discloses a connection control method for a television conference system in which a promoter terminal that is used by a promoter (reads on 300, Drawings: 1-2, 4) who promotes conference, and participant terminals (302-305, Drawings: 1, 4) that are used by participants in the conference are connected to one another via a communication line (Drawing 1), the method comprising: setting a maximum connection line number N of the participant terminals which are to be connected to the promoter terminal (this is implied as the reference illustrates four of the participant terminals 302-305 are connected to 300, see Drawing: 4A), and connecting the participant terminals to the promoter terminal while setting a connection line number M of the connected participant terminals (303-304, Drawing 4A) to $M \leq N$ (abstract and paragraphs: 0011, 0017-0022).

Regarding claims 2, 7, and 11, Wakahara further teaches the following: participant terminals include speaker terminals (303-304, Drawing 4) which are enabled to perform two-way communication with the promoter terminal (reads on reads on 300, Drawings: 1-2, 4), and audience terminals (302, 305, Drawing 4) which are enabled to perform one way communication with the promoter terminal, and the connection line

number M of participant terminals which are connected to the promoter terminal is set to M=2S+T where S is a number of connected speaker terminals and T is the number of connected audience terminals, in accordance with selection, each of the participant terminals (for example 303-304, Drawing 4) functions as a speaker terminal which is enabled to perform two-way communication with the promoter terminal, or as an audience terminal (for example 302, 305, Drawing 4) which is enabled to perform one way communication with the promoter terminal, each of the terminals functioning as an audience terminal comprise a section for sending a request for transferring to the speaker terminal to the promoter terminal, an a section for, on the basis of a request permission of the promoter terminal, transferring to a speaker terminal (paragraphs: 0017-0022).

3. Claims 3-5, 8-10 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melur Ramakrishnaiah whose telephone number is (703) 305-1461. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-4:00; every other F Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on (703)305-4708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Melur Ramakrishnaiah
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2643